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II

99TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3272

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 3 (legislative day, DECEMBER 2), 1985

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

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## AN ACT

To encourage international efforts to designate the shipwreck of the R.M.S. Titanic as an international maritime memorial and to provide for reasonable research, exploration and, if appropriate, salvage activities with respect to the shipwreck.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “R.M.S. Titanic Maritime  
5       Memorial Act of 1985”.

1 SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

2 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

3 (1) the R.M.S. Titanic, the ocean liner which sank  
4 on her maiden voyage after striking an iceberg on  
5 April 14, 1912, should be designated as an internation-  
6 al maritime memorial to the men, women, and children  
7 who perished aboard her;

8 (2) the recent discovery of the R.M.S. Titanic,  
9 lying more than twelve thousand feet beneath the  
10 ocean surface, demonstrates the practical applications  
11 of ocean science and engineering;

12 (3) the R.M.S. Titanic, well-preserved in the cold,  
13 oxygen-poor waters of the deep North Atlantic Ocean,  
14 is of major national and international cultural and his-  
15 torical significance, and merits appropriate internation-  
16 al protection; and

17 (4) the R.M.S. Titanic represents a special oppor-  
18 tunity for deep ocean scientific research and  
19 exploration.

20 (b) PURPOSES.—The Congress declares that the pur-  
21 poses of this Act are—

22 (1) to encourage international efforts to designate  
23 the R.M.S. Titanic as an international maritime memo-  
24 rial to those who lost their lives aboard her in 1912;

25 (2) to direct the United States to enter into nego-  
26 tiations with other interested nations to establish an

1 international agreement which will provide for designa-  
2 tion of the R.M.S. Titanic as an international maritime  
3 memorial, and protect the scientific, cultural, and his-  
4 torical significance of the R.M.S. Titanic;

5 (3) to encourage, in those negotiations or in other  
6 fora, the development and implementation of interna-  
7 tional guidelines for conducting research on, explora-  
8 tion of, and if appropriate, salvage of the R.M.S.  
9 Titanic; and

10 (4) to express the sense of the United States Con-  
11 gress that, pending such international agreement or  
12 guidelines, no person should physically alter, disturb,  
13 or salvage the R.M.S. Titanic in any research or  
14 exploratory activities which are conducted.

15 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

16 For the purposes of this Act, the term—

17 (a) “Administrator” means the Administrator of  
18 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
19 (NOAA);

20 (b) “person” means any individual (whether or not  
21 a citizen or national of the United States), any corpo-  
22 ration, partnership, association, or other entity (wheth-  
23 er or not organized or existing under the laws of any  
24 State), and any Federal, State, local, or foreign gov-  
25 ernment or any entity of any such government;

1 (c) "R.M.S. Titanic" means the shipwrecked  
2 vessel R.M.S. Titanic, her cargo or other contents, in-  
3 cluding those items which are scattered on the ocean  
4 floor in her vicinity; and

5 (d) "Secretary" means the Secretary of State.

6 **SEC. 4. COMMENDATION.**

7 The Congress of the United States highly commends the  
8 members of the joint international expedition which discov-  
9 ered the R.M.S. Titanic.

10 **SEC. 5. INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES.**

11 (a) The Administrator is directed to enter into consulta-  
12 tions with the United Kingdom, France, Canada, and other  
13 interested nations to develop international guidelines for re-  
14 search on, exploration of, and if appropriate, salvage of the  
15 R.M.S. Titanic, which:

16 (1) are consistent with its national and interna-  
17 tional scientific, cultural, and historical significance and  
18 the purposes of this Act; and

19 (2) promote the safety of individuals involved in  
20 such operations.

21 (b) In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator  
22 shall consult with the Secretary and shall promote full par-  
23 ticipation by other interested Federal agencies, academic and  
24 research institutions, and members of the public.

1 SEC. 6. INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT.

2 (a) The Secretary is directed to enter into negotiations  
3 with the United Kingdom, France, Canada, and other inter-  
4 ested nations to develop an international agreement which  
5 provides for:

6 (1) the designation of the R.M.S. Titanic as an  
7 international maritime memorial; and

8 (2) research on, exploration of, and if appropriate,  
9 salvage of the R.M.S. Titanic consistent with the inter-  
10 national guidelines developed pursuant to section (5)  
11 and the purposes of this Act.

12 (b) In carrying out the requirements of subsection (a),  
13 the Secretary shall consult with the Administrator, who shall  
14 provide research and technical assistance to the Secretary.

15 (c) The Secretary and the Administrator shall report  
16 semiannually to the Committee on Merchant Marine and  
17 Fisheries and the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House  
18 of Representatives and to the appropriate Committee in the  
19 Senate on the progress of the negotiations and consultations.

20 (d) Upon adoption of an international agreement as de-  
21 scribed in subsection (a), the Secretary shall provide notifica-  
22 tion of the agreement and recommendations for legislation to  
23 implement the agreement to the Committee on Merchant  
24 Marine and Fisheries and the Committee on Foreign Affairs  
25 in the House of Representatives and to the appropriate  
26 Committee in the Senate.

1 SEC. 7. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING CONDUCT OF  
2 FUTURE ACTIVITIES.

3 It is the sense of Congress that research and limited  
4 exploration activities concerning the R.M.S. Titanic should  
5 continue for the purpose of enhancing public knowledge of its  
6 scientific, cultural, and historical significance: *Provided,*  
7 That, pending adoption of the international agreement de-  
8 scribed in section 6(a) or implementation of the international  
9 guidelines described in section 5, no person should conduct  
10 any such research or exploration activity which would phys-  
11 ically alter, disturb, or salvage the R.M.S. Titanic.

12 SEC. 8. DISCLAIMER OF EXTRATERRITORIAL SOVEREIGNTY.

13 By enactment of this Act, the United States does not  
14 assert sovereignty, or sovereign or exclusive rights or juris-  
15 diction over, or the ownership of, any marine areas or the  
16 R.M.S. Titanic.

Passed the House of Representatives December 2,  
1985.

Attest: BENJAMIN J. GUTHRIE,  
*Clerk.*